

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 0957Z 132214Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----112743 132218Z /64
O 132049Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4258

S E C R E T BOGOTA 9572

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PINS, CO
SUBJECT: STARR KIDNAPPING; MEETING WITH MANCHOLA

1. MANCHOLA CONTACTED PC DIRECTOR SORZANO ON OCT 13 A FEW HOURS AFTER

BOGOTA 9550 WAS SENT.

2. MANCHOLA SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO COME EARLIER
DUE TO A PERSONAL ILLNESS. HE HAD NOT TALKED TO FARC
OR RECEIVED ANY MESSAGES FROM THEM SINCE HIS LAST MEETING
WITH SORZANO AND HAD ONLY COME TO RECEIVE OUR REPLY TO
FARC'S EARLIER MESSAGE.

3. SORZANO TOLD MANCHOLA EMBASSY HAD GIVEN FARC'S
LETTER OT PRESIDENT LOPEZ AND THAT THE COLOMBIAN GOVERN-
MENT'S REPLY WAS THAT "THE OFFICIAL POLICY OF THE
COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT ON THESE MATTERS WAS A MATTER OF
PUBLIC RECORD AND SHOULD BE WELL-KNOWN TO EVERYBODY,"
SORZANO CONTINUED BY STRESSING THAT MRS. JENSEN, AS MOTHER
OF RICHARD STARR, WAS VERY INTERESTED IN HIS SAFE RELEASE
AND HAD SENT A LETTER TO HER SON EXPRESSING HER WILLING-
NESS TO USE HER LIMITED RESOURCES TO SECURE HIS PROMPT
RELEASE. SORZANO THEN HANDED MRS. JENSEN'S LETTER TO
MANCHOLA, WHO SAID HE WOULD DELIVER IT TO FARC BY SATURDAY,

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OCTOBER 15.

4. SORZANO NEXT BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF THE INTER-
MEDIARY. HE TOLD MANCHOLA THAT MRS. JENSEN HAD SELECTED
AN INERMEDIARY HWHO, HOWEVER, HAD ASKED FOR A NUMBER OF
CONDITIONS. AMONG THESE THE MOST IMPORTANT WAS THAT THE
INTERMEDIARY DID NOT WANT TO RECEIVE PHONE CALLS AT HIS

HOME. NOR DID HE WANT TO HAVE TO GO TO PLACES IN BOGOTA WHERE AN AMERICAN WOULD NOT NORMALLY BE SEEN. MANCHOLA SAW THESE CONDITIONS AS REASONABLE AND ASKED WHETHER HE COULD MEET THE INTERMEDIARY IN HIS NEXT TRIP. SORZANO REPLIED THAT THE INTERMEDIARY WANTED ABSOLUTE SECRECY AND HAD ASKED THAT ONLY PHONE CONTACTS BE MADE TO PRESERVE HIS ANONYMITY.

5. FINALLY, SORZANO ASKED MANCHOLA TO DETERMINE HOW FARC WANTED TO SET UP THE SYSTEM OF CONTACTS WITH THE INTERMEDIARY. IF FARC WANTED TO REACH HIM BY PHONE, SORZANO SUGGESTED THAT THEY USE A CODE AND HE GAVE MANCHOLA A SHEET OF PAPER CONTAINING THE SUGGESTED CODE. MANCHOLA REPLIED THAT HE WOULD DELIVER THIS REQUEST TO FARC AND WOULD BE BACK OCTOBER 28 TO MEET WITH SORZANO.

6. COMMENT: MANCHOLA DID NOT KNOW THE NATURE OF THE DEMANDS MADE BY FARC. THUS, HE DID NOT READILY UNDERSTAND WHEN SORZANO ASKED ABOUT FARC'S PURPOSE IN ASKING FOR AN INTERMEDIARY. SORZANO BELIEVES THAT MANCHOLA IS -SO FAR - PURELY A COURIER AND THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FARC'S MOTIVATIONS.

7. THIS, HOWEVER, MAY CHANGE. MANCHOLA SAID THAT SO FAR HE HAS BEEN DEALING WITH FARC'S MESSENGERS BUT THAT HE HOPES TO TALK DIRECTLY TO FARC'S LEADERSHIP IN THE
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NEAR FUTURE.

8. FINALLY, SORZANO GAVE MANCHOLA 350 PESOS AND THE MEETING ENDED ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES AFTER IT STARTED.
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NNN

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